

RHODE ISLAND ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT CORPORATION

**MEETING OF THE COMMUNITY COLLEGE OF RHODE ISLAND
21ST CENTURY WORKFORCE COMMISSION**

PUBLIC SESSION

JUNE 19, 2009

The third meeting on the 21st Century Workforce Commission (the Commission) was held on Friday, June 19, 2009, in Public Session in the office of the Rhode Island Economic Development Corporation, 315 Iron Horse Way, Suite 101, Providence, Rhode Island pursuant to notice of the meeting to all Members and public notice of meeting, a copy of which is attached hereto, as required by applicable Rhode Island Law.

The following Members were present and participated throughout the meeting as indicated: Armeather Gibbs, Chair; J. Michael Saul; Christopher Wissmann; Eileen Farley; Diane St. Laurent; Paul Harrington; William McGowan; Sen. Daniel Connors; Leslie Taito; Sandra Powell.

Mr. Julian Alssid and Ms. Maureen Bozell of Workforce Strategy Center facilitated the meeting and Ms. Gibbs presided.

Welcome

Ms. Gibbs called the meeting to order at 9:09 a.m. She welcomed everyone and announced the meeting would begin as an information session until a forum is reached.

Meeting Demands of the Rhode Island Knowledge Economy

Christopher Wissmann, Chief Operating Officer of Deepwater Wind Holdings, laid the groundwork for starting a whole new industry in RI, offshore wind energy. There is a new emphasis throughout the country regarding clean renewables, where the northeast of the United States would benefit greatly from focusing on off-shore wind technology. Mr. Wissman's company Deep Water Wind is proposing to build a offshore wind park, with development taking place in Quonset, RI. There is great potential for job creation in wind projects, mainly in the areas of manufacturing and construction. The process would be extremely time consuming, with majority of jobs created being a decade away, however training could begin once site is secured and project is permitted.

In order to better understand the Commission's role, Mr. Alssid asked Tim Herbert, Chair of Tech Collective, to talk about his current experience and his sector's needs. Mr. Herbert explained the biggest challenge is finding workers with the necessary foundational skills. The IT field requires workers with written and verbal communication skills, problem solving skills, critical thought skills, etc. Training of these skills is vital to have a productive workforce; education is lifelong.

Ms. Leslie Taito, CEO of Rhode Island Manufacturing Extension Services, reiterated that for her sector, these basic skills are needed before training begins.

Approval of Consultant for Commission

Approval of a consultant for the commission was currently put on hold after determining that the Rhode Island Economic Development Corporation is not entering any contracts at this time. Upon a motion duly made by Senator Collins, and seconded by J. Michael Saul, at the time a work plan is devised, a statement of work will then be created.

Strategic Workforce Plan for Rhode Island: 2009-2014

Ms. Gibbs next introduced Sandra Powell, Director of the Rhode Island Department of Labor and Training. Ms. Powell gave a presentation to the Commission on the state's Public Workforce System; how it relates in dollars - particularly to CCRI; and the future vision relative to the system and how it relates to the strategic plan. Ms. Powell explained the long term goal is to turn RI's workforce into an economic asset. The foundational skills that, several years ago, would allow you to maintain middle class status, are no longer good enough. RI needs to grow and improve the public systems, and employees need to adopt a lifelong learning method in order for their skills to not become obsolete

Next Steps

No new steps were presented at this meeting.

Ajournment

The meeting was adjourned at 11:59 a.m.